



# Consideration of Potential Odour Impact from Proposed Pet Crematorium at Dockber Laithe Farm, Sawley, Clitheroe, BB7 4LF.

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## **Contents**

1. Introduction .....	3
Site Location and Context .....	4
2. Policy and Guidance.....	5
3. The Assessment .....	7
The development.....	7
Potential Odour Impact .....	8
Other Potential Odour Sources.....	8
Prevailing Wind Direction .....	9
Potential Impact on the development site .....	9
4 Conclusion.....	13
Figure 1 – Aerial Photograph .....	14
Figure 2 – Proposed Layout Plan.....	15
Appendix A – Prevailing Wind Direction .....	16
Appendix B – Indicative Modelling Results.....	17



## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Martin Environmental Solutions has been commissioned to undertake a consideration of the potential impact from odour emissions in relation to a proposed Pet Crematorium at Dockber Laithe Farm, Sawley, Clitheroe, BB7 4LF.
- 1.2. This Report supports a full S73A planning application submitted by Beloved Pets Limited, which seeks retrospective planning permission for the construction of a steel portal framed building with associated chimney stack, to be used as a pet crematorium at Dockber Laithe Farm, Sawley Old Brow, Sawley, BB7 4LF.
- 1.3. The application follows recent refusal of application 3/2025/0517. That application proposed almost identical works / use, and the purpose of this new application is a positive attempt to address the reasons for refusal.
- 1.4. This proposal deviates from the refused application only in respect of the fitting of a cowl above the chimney stack, which will increase efflux velocity and aid dispersion of any associated emissions.
- 1.5. The previous application was refused on, inter alia, the following ground:

*"The application fails to demonstrate that the development can be appropriately mitigated to avoid future incidents of adverse smoke and odour emissions from the development.*

*Therefore the development fails to protect the amenities of nearby surrounding residential properties from adverse odour and smoke pollution, contrary to Policy DMG1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy."*
- 1.6. This report provides an update and additional information to a previous assessment undertaken in September 2025 as a concerted and positive attempt to address the concerns highlighted in the above reason for refusal, including details of practices that have been implemented since the original application.



## **Site Location and Context**

- 1.7. The development site is situated to the west of Dockber Laithe Farm, agricultural/industrial buildings are located to the south, north and east of the building with a slurry tank to the southwest. Additional farm buildings are located further to the west along the access track, including a farm house 120m away and some small privately owned cottages 240m west.
- 1.8. To the north, east and south beyond the immediate farm are agricultural fields. The nearest properties are 670m southeast and 1.2Km west.
- 1.9. An aerial Photograph is enclosed in Figure 1, together with a proposed layout drawing in Figure 2.
- 1.10. The report has been produced to clarify the potential impact on the proposed development and to identify mitigation measures if required to ensure the development is appropriate in terms of odour impact.



## **2. Policy and Guidance**

- 2.1. The Government sets out its policy in relation to planning in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should “preventing new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability”; and “In preparing plans to meet development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment”
  
- 2.2. While Odour is not specifically mentioned in is implied by the above and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) note issued by the government on Air Quality states “odour and dust can also be a planning concern, for example; because of the effects on local amenity” it continues to state “mitigation options where necessary, will depend on the proposed development and should be proportionate to the likely impact”.
  
- 2.3. The Institute of Air Quality Management identify within their guidance document ‘*Guidance on the assessment of odour for planning*’ that before an odour can be present an adverse effect, there must be exposure to the odour and therefore a **source**, a **pathway**, and a **receptor**. Without these three links no exposure can occur. In the case of this application the source is the proposed pet crematorium. The pathway is the air and the receptor are the occupants of the dwellings to the east of the site , particularly the residential developments.
  
- 2.4. The above guidance also identifies and clarifies the types of receptors as high, medium or low sensitivity. Details in Table 2 of the guidance document reproduced below.



**Table 2: Receptor sensitivity to odours**

For the sensitivity of people to odour, the IAQM recommends that the Air Quality Practitioner uses professional judgement to identify where on the spectrum between high and low sensitivity a receptor lies, taking into account the following general principles:

<b>High sensitivity receptor</b>	<p>Surrounding land where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• users can reasonably expect enjoyment of a high level of amenity; and</li> <li>• people would reasonably be expected to be present here continuously, or at least regularly for extended periods, as part of the normal pattern of use of the land.</li> </ul> <p>Examples may include residential dwellings, hospitals, schools/education and tourist/cultural.</p>
<b>Medium sensitivity receptor</b>	<p>Surrounding land where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• users would expect to enjoy a reasonable level of amenity, but wouldn't reasonably expect to enjoy the same level of amenity as in their home; or</li> <li>• people wouldn't reasonably be expected to be present here continuously or regularly for extended periods as part of the normal pattern of use of the land.</li> </ul> <p>Examples may include places of work, commercial/retail premises and playing/recreation fields.</p>
<b>Low sensitivity receptor</b>	<p>Surrounding land where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the enjoyment of amenity would not reasonably be expected; or</li> <li>• there is transient exposure, where the people would reasonably be expected to be present only for limited periods of time as part of the normal pattern of use of the land.</li> </ul> <p>Examples may include industrial use, farms, footpaths and roads.</p>

- 2.5. In assessing the impact of odour on or from a development the scale of the exposure and therefore impact is determined by the parameters collectively known as the FIDO factors (Frequency, Intensity, Duration and Offensiveness). In addition, the sensitivity of the receptor (location) will determine the magnitude of the exposure.



### **3. The Assessment**

#### **The development**

- 3.1 The proposed development consists of two small animal carcase cremators with a total capacity of less than 50Kg/hr, they are therefore deemed by Defra to be small cremators, with limited environmental impact and not subject to the additional controls under the Local Air Pollution Prevention and Control (LAPPC) regime in England and Wales.
- 3.2 The cremators are located to the far east of the farm complex in a small addition to a large barn. A single stack is fitted through the roof and terminates at a height of 5.6m from the floor. There is no restriction to the final opening ensuring emissions rise and can disperse. Figure 2 below provides an overview of the proposed development.
- 3.3 Since the original site visit and assessment in September the cremators have undergone a full service, correcting burning issues identified, full retraining of staff has been undertaken and a jet cowl fitted to the final opening of the stack.
- 3.4 The cremators have been certified as complying with the industry guidelines for burning control and emissions.
- 3.5 The cremators consist of a primary combustion centre, where the remains are loaded into the cremator when ready. Waste gases from this chamber are then directed through to the secondary chamber. The purpose of the secondary combustion chamber is to provide sufficient temperature and residence time for the complete oxidation of all the gaseous products of combustion in the primary chamber. Heat is then recirculated to the primary chamber, to help maintain the temperature and to reduce fuel usage.
- 3.6 The cremators at Dockber Laithe Farm have been serviced and in conjunction with retraining of crematorium staff are now operating within industrial guidelines.
- 3.7 Control over the combustion conditions is of fundamental importance in preventing and controlling emissions to air, including odour.

The key controls over the combustion conditions are the:



- combustion temperature
  - residence time of the combustion gases in the secondary combustion chamber
- 3.8 The secondary chamber is operated at or above 850°C as per the industry norm and recently revised national government guidelines<sup>1</sup>.
- 3.9 The cremator has been designed to achieve a minimal residence time of 2secs and has been certified as achieving this, again in accordance with recently revised national government guidelines.
- 3.10 Each cremation is monitored and recorded to include start and end times, wind direction and whether there are any visible emissions from the stack. A camera has also been fitted to allow easy monitoring when cremations are first started, the period when the bulk of any pollutants are created in the primary chamber as fats burn.
- 3.11 Since the servicing and retraining a further visit to the site has been made to observe the cremation of a large dog, breed Dogue de Bordeaux weighting ~72 Kg, the largest animal cremated that day and one of the larger animals to be cremated on site.
- 3.12 The dog was seen loaded into the primary chamber once temperature checks had been undertaken and checks for any emissions from the stack made. The weather at the time was dry, sunny and very slight easterly breeze, unusual for the area. Checks were made both up and down wind of the stack throughout the cremation, along with temperature checks of both chambers.
- 3.13 With the exception of a slight heat haze no emissions from the stack were visible and no odours detected.

## **Potential Odour Impact**

### **Other Potential Odour Sources**

- 3.14 A review of the area has been undertaken and additional existing sources of odour identified. Significantly these include the existing farm complex, including slurry storage, slurry spreading on the surrounding fields with the potential to generate offensive odours which will affect the neighbouring receptors.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/crematoria-process-guidance-note>



- 3.15 Dunbia slaughter house is also located to the southeast, a potential for odour releases from animal waste.
- 3.16 Existing use of the surrounding fields by livestock. While considered minor the use of the surrounding fields for grazing has the potential to generate odour emissions.
- 3.17 Existing use of the surrounding fields for slurry spreading. This activity is now strictly controlled with modern methods used to avoid emissions, and is typical for a rural area and generally excepted. The potential for odour emissions in the surrounding fields does existing and the odour is generally considered unpleasant.

### **Prevailing Wind Direction**

- 3.18 The prevailing wind direction has been obtained from the Lea Town and Cockerham weather stations, the nearest data sets to the site. These indicate that the prevailing wind direction is West, West-south-westerly. This would generally blow any emissions away from the nearest residential properties over open farm land, preventing any regular impact on the dwellings from the development.

### **Potential Impact on the development site**

- 3.19 The operation of the cremators results in a temperature of +850°C, and the system has been constructed to ensure a residence time of at least 2secs within the chamber. This time and temperature combination is adequate to complete oxidation of all the gaseous products of combustion from the primary chamber. While exempt the cremator is designed and operated to comply with PG guidance notes written to assist local authorities with functions under the Environmental Permitting Regulations (amended) 2016, including larger crematorium processes.
- 3.20 To ascertain the potential impact from odour the IAQM guidance document details the FIDOL parameters to help determine the impact:
- Frequency
  - Intensity
  - Duration
  - Offensiveness
  - Location
- 3.21 The potential odours would only impact on the neighbouring properties if released from the site. Following servicing of the units the temperature and residence time within the



secondary chamber is designed to prevent and releases, and monitoring of a "large" cremation has confirmed no visible or odourous emissions from the stack.

- 3.22 While the greater the distance between the emission point and the receptor the greater the dilution of any emissions would be and the lower the impact at the receptor site.

#### Frequency & Duration

- 3.23 The use of the cremator is limited in both size, duration of each cremation and the business available for the company. It takes around 90-120 minutes to carry out one cremation this includes the loading a cool down/rake out times so the actual cremation is limited to < 1-1.5hour. However as with all cremations it is the first part of the cremation where the most emissions are generated within the primary chamber. The potential for emissions is therefore limited by the size and operation of the cremators as well as the amount of business available to the company.
- 3.24 The prevailing wind direction is also an important factor in the frequency and duration of any potential odour impact. The prevailing wind direction will remove any potential emission towards the east away from the nearby receptors and over open fields.
- 3.25 The frequency and duration of any emission towards the nearest receptor location is therefore considered to be minimal.

#### Intensity (of Odour)

- 3.26 The cremator operates at a high temperature, designed to destroy volatile components (odours), in addition the site is located 120m from the nearest receptor location, which belongs to the owner of the site and is typically upwind from the cremator. The next nearest property has been identified at 240m away. Allowing adequate dispersion of any odourous emissions should they occur and should the wind not be in the prevailing direction.
- 3.27 The intensity of any emissions will be reduced due to the separating distance between the site and the receptors.
- 3.28 In order to assess the potential intensity of any emissions a model of the cremator emissions has been built. As the exact emissions from the site are unknown the levels to which the cremator has been certified and those detailed as emissions limits within the relevant PG note for the permitting regime have been used as actual emissions.



Typically, emissions from combustion processes are, when test, found to be substantially below these limit values and so the use of the limit values represents a worst case situation.

- 3.29 The model has been set up using ADMS-Roads air quality modelling with the stack identified as a point source within the model. Emissions have been based on the limit values for particulates (PM<sub>10</sub>) of 100mg/m<sup>3</sup>, Carbon Monoxide (CO), 100mg/m<sup>3</sup>, and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), 10mg/m<sup>3</sup>. These have recently been reduced within the published PG notes, but the higher levels utilised for the assessment.
- 3.30 While the cremators have been certified and operator with an efflux velocity of ~15m/s a lower figure of 10m/s has been used resulting in less dispersion of any emissions.
- 3.31 Weather data for the model has been used from Manchester airport as a representative, available, site for the area covering a five year period.
- 3.32 The modelling, which is acknowledged as only providing an indication of potential impact, identifies the main deposition of any emissions being to the east of the site away from any residential receptor locations, no emissions at the identified privately owned cottages, and a slight impact <1µg/m<sup>3</sup> at the applicants property, See Appendix B.
- 3.33 Confirming the above assumption that should any emission occur they are likely to be noticed to the east and downwind of the site, while those receptor points to the west and upwind will experience minimal if any impact.

#### Offensiveness

- 3.34 Should any emissions from the cremator occur, the odours would be similar to charcoal-like or burnt meat odours and could be considered mildly offensive. However, given the control measures in place and high cremating temperatures destroying volatiles the emission are, during normal operations free from any odours.

#### Location

- 3.35 The site is located in an open area some distance from the nearest receptor locations which are located upwind from the cremator.



3.36 The development is unlikely to produce any odourous emissions and even if it were the nearest receptors are located some distance from the site allowing sufficient dispersion to result in a negligible impact from any emissions.



## **4 Conclusion**

- 4.1. An assessment of the odour generating potential of the development has been undertaken, considering the location, design and identified receptor positions. An indicative conservative model has been run which indicates the likelihood of negligible emissions and impact on the identified receptors, with the bulk of emissions being downwind of the development and away from the receptor positions.
- 4.2. A further consideration of other potential sources in the area, has also been included, identifying typical rural sources and an abattoir.
- 4.3. Controls over the activities of the development have been identified and assessed. The site is operating in accordance with national guidelines and an inspection of the site during operation has been made with no visible or odourous emissions identified. These are now being routinely being monitored and recorded by staff.
- 4.4. The development operates in such a manner to prevent odours being released from the operations, principally the operating temperatures and residence time within the secondary combustion chamber, the equipment and operation having been designed to achieve full cremation of the animal carcasses, destroy any volatile emissions, minimising emissions.
- 4.5. The site has also been located at the far side of the wider farm complex creating a significant distance between the site and the nearest receptor location, which is upwind of the development.
- 4.6. The proposal will therefore, during normal operation, not produce any odours that will have the potential to result in any significant adverse impact while the separation distances and location upwind of the nearest receptors will ensure no impact on the nearby residential sensitive receptors as required by the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 4.7. The development therefore complies with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework in terms of odour and is considered acceptable.



**Figure 1 – Aerial Photograph**

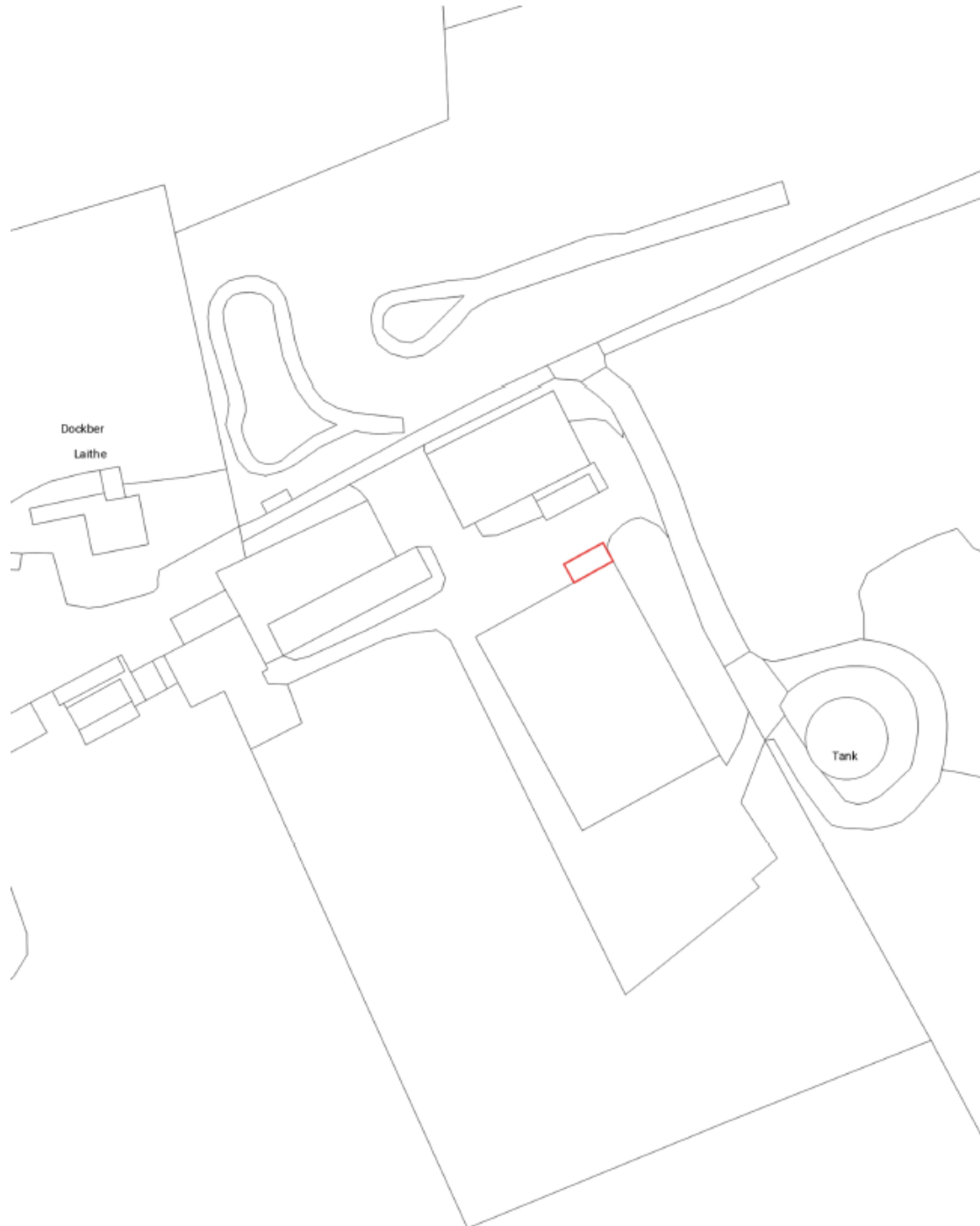




## Figure 2 – Proposed Layout Plan

Pet Crematorium at Dockber  
Laithe, Sawley - Location Plan

RS/JB/Loc01



reduced on Land App, Jul 2, 2025  
© Crown copyright and database rights 2025 (licence number 100059532)

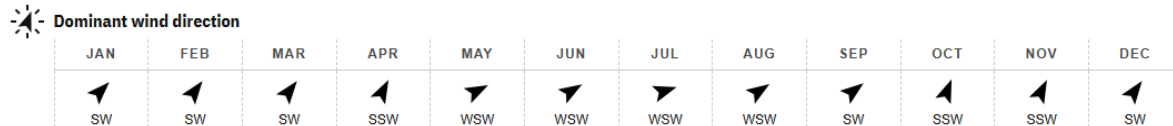
20 m  
Scale 1:1000 (at A4)



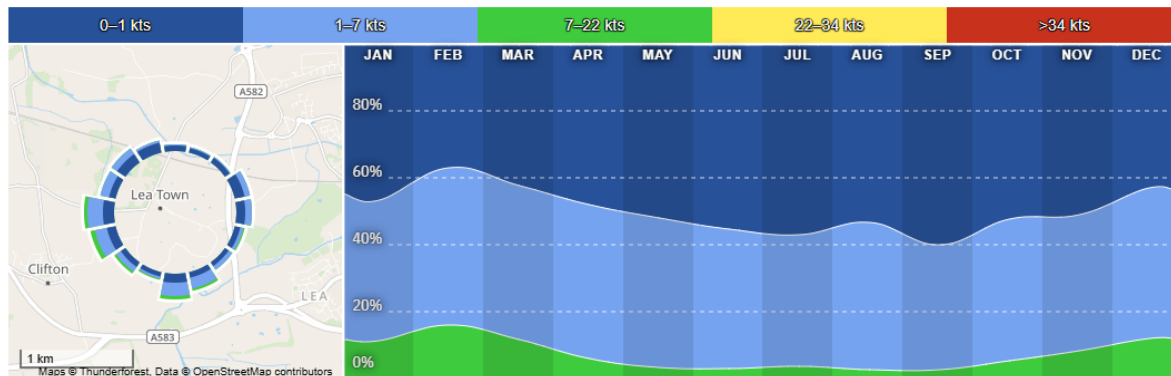


## Appendix A – Prevailing Wind Direction

### Monthly wind speed statistics and directions for Lea Town



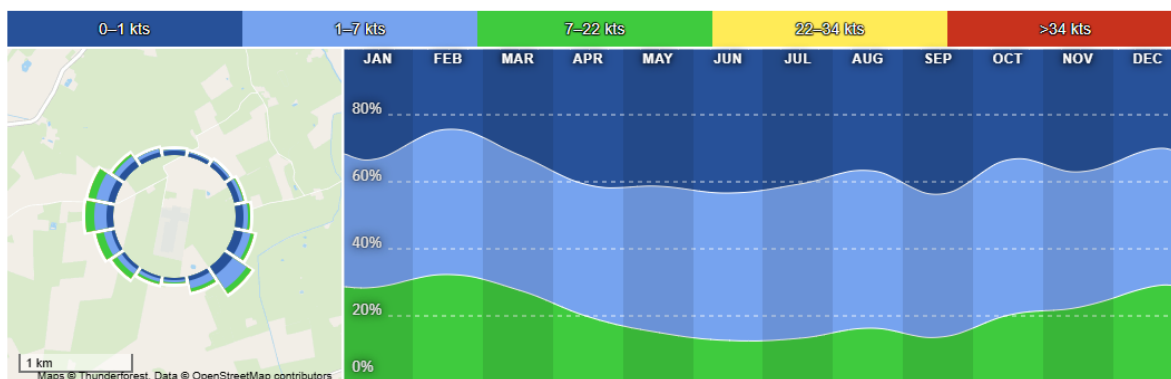
### Monthly wind direction and strength distribution



### Monthly wind speed statistics and directions for Cockerham



### Monthly wind direction and strength distribution





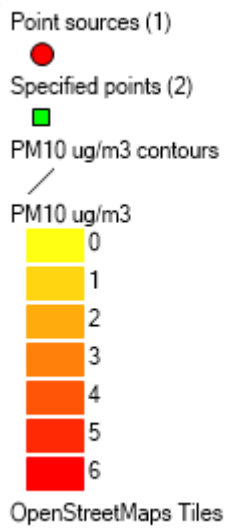
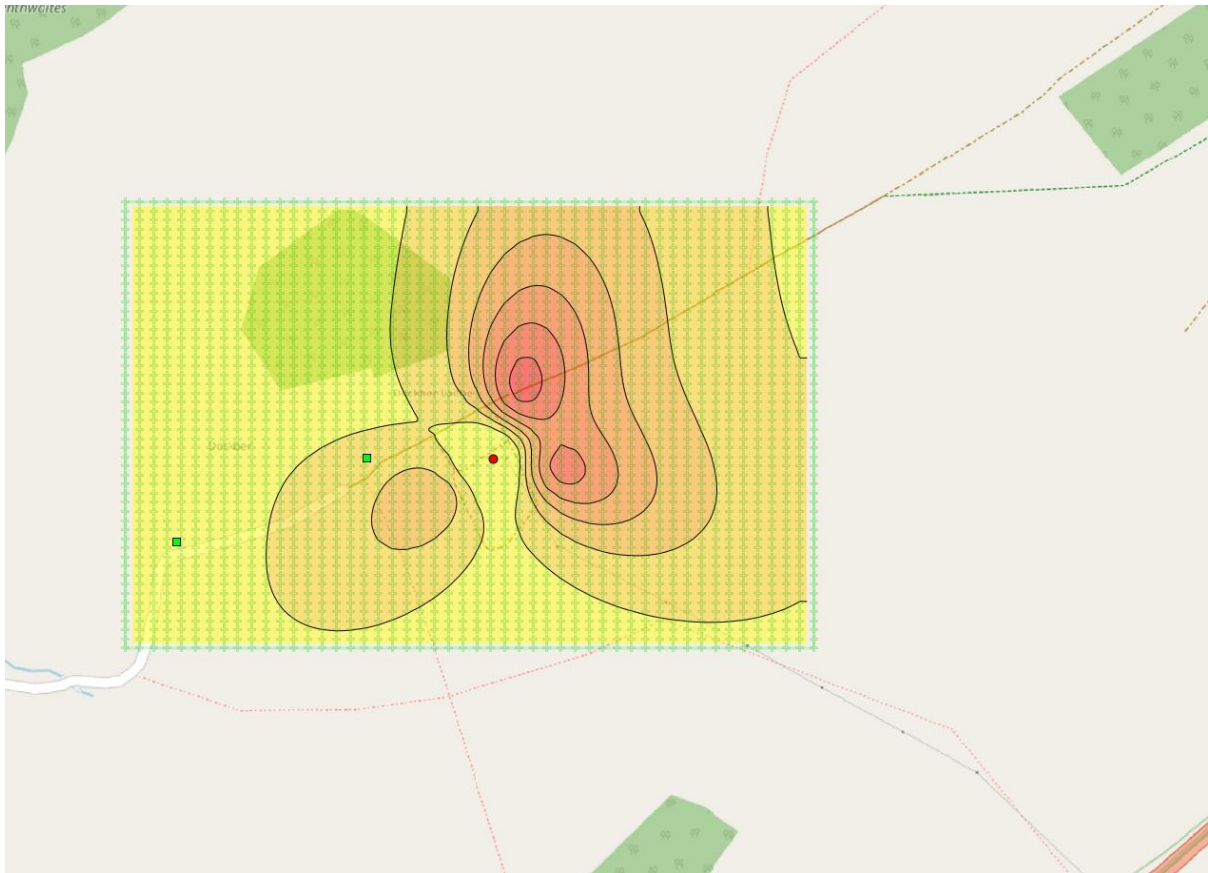
## Appendix B – Indicative Modelling Results

Basemap



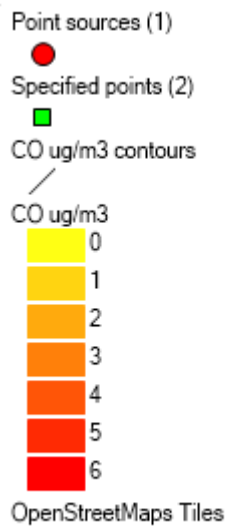
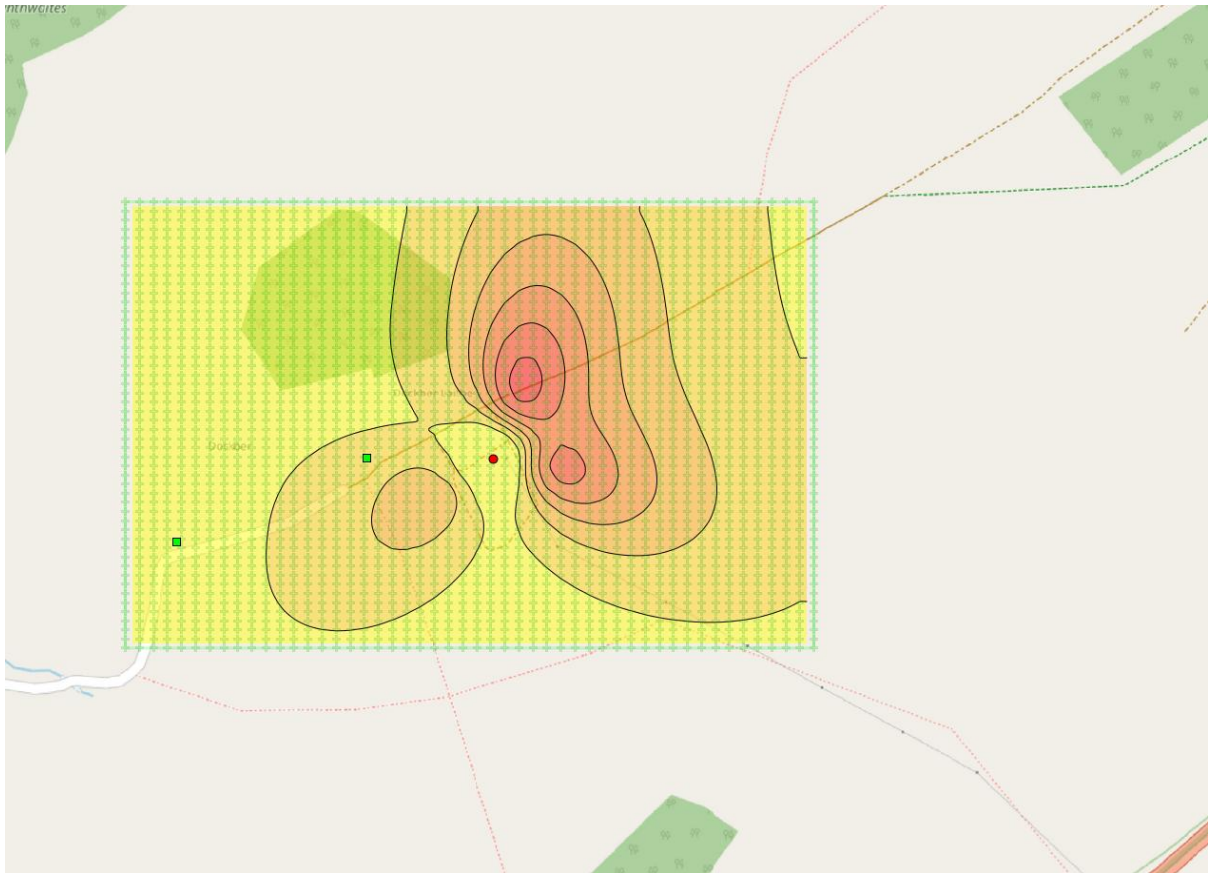


PM<sub>10</sub>



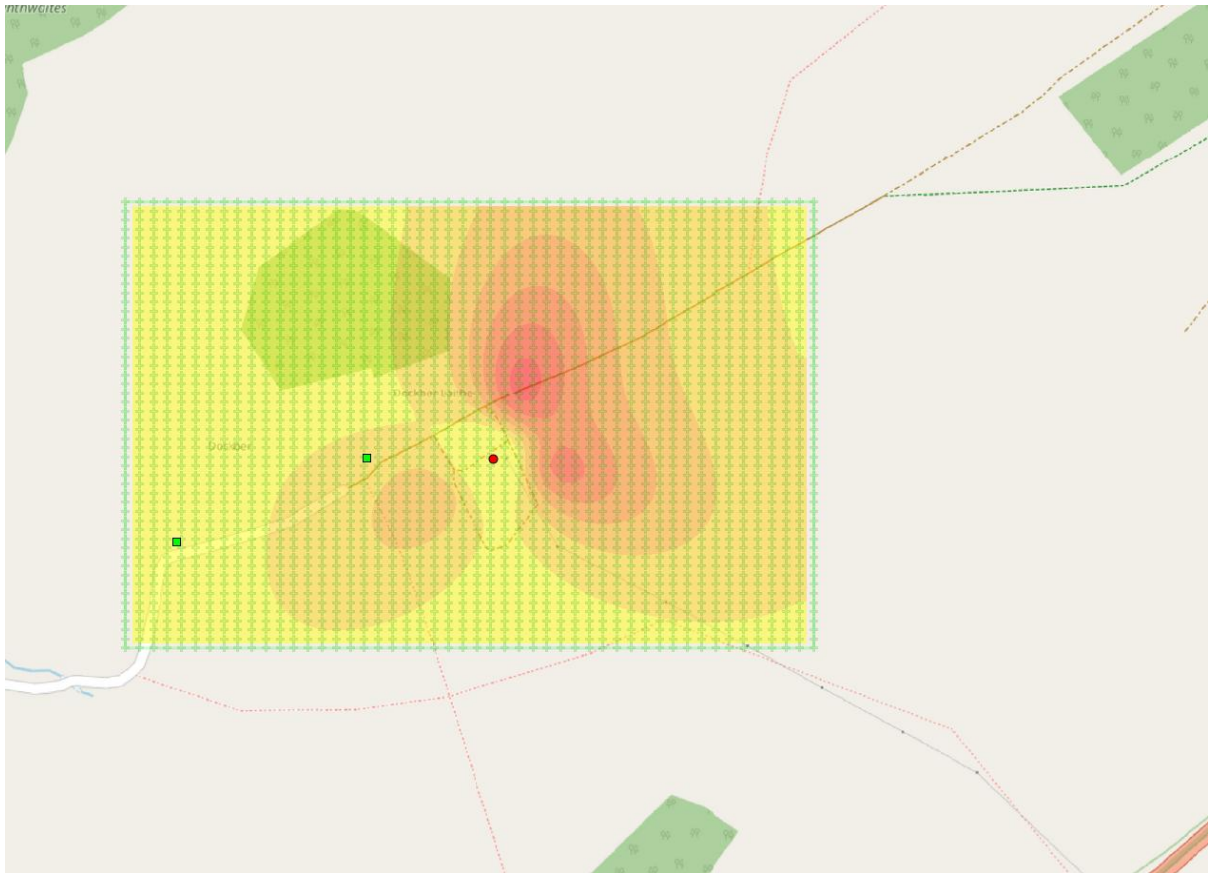


CO





VOC's



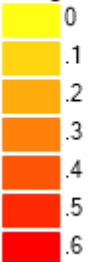
Point sources (1)



Specified points (2)



VOC ug/m3



OpenStreetMaps Tiles